



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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PLM-2
Mitchell

B-193856

MAY 5 1980

✓ The Honorable Joel Pritchard
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Pritchard:

This refers to your letter dated April 11, 1980, forwarding a letter from Commander James H. Baker, U.S. Navy of Seattle, Washington, concerning [interest on money due] him from the United States Government. PN

As we advised you in our letter B-193856, March 26, 1980, we concluded that Commander Baker was entitled to \$632.12, which was withheld from his pay, in connection with a shipment of his household goods. He now asks why interest is not payable on this amount in view of the considerable time which elapsed while his claim was being considered. He cites examples of the interest charges assessed on claims by the United States and interest paid in connection with certain contracts with the United States.

As we pointed out in our letter of March 26, 1980, to Commander Baker, interest may not be paid by the United States on claims against it. The rule is that interest may not be paid on claims against the United States except when interest is provided for in legal and proper contracts or when allowance of interest is specifically directed by statute. This rule is well settled and has been consistently applied. See Angarica v. Bayard, 127 U.S. 251 (1888); United States v. North American Transportation and Trading Co., 253 U.S. 330 (1920); Smyth v. United States, 302 U.S. 329 (1937); United States v. Hotel Co., 329 U.S. 585 (1947).

Thus, while it is regrettable that settlement of Commander Baker's claim was delayed, we are not aware of any authority for the payment of interest on the amount withheld from his pay.

We trust the foregoing is responsive to your inquiry.

Sincerely yours,

MILTON SOCOLAR

For the Comptroller General
of the United States

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